

# Bothe-Napa Valley State Park



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**Bothe-Napa Valley State Park**

**3801 St. Helena Highway**

**Calistoga, CA 94515**

**(707) 942-4575**

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*Sun-dappled oaks stand  
fast amidst magnificent  
soaring redwoods,  
pines and other mossy,  
wizened trees shading  
the trails at Bothe-Napa  
Valley State Park.*





*A* place for all seasons, **Bothe-Napa Valley State Park** offers visitors a different kind of California wine country experience. Nestled in historic Napa Valley five miles north of St. Helena, the 1,900-acre park features campsites, rugged trails and a swimming pool. In summer, coast redwood and Douglas-fir trees shade the park, creating a refuge from Napa Valley's summertime heat. In spring, calypso orchids, trillium and other wildflowers greet hikers. Autumn brings showy fall foliage, and in winter, mosses and fungi dot the park.

### **PARK HISTORY**

#### **Native People**

From 6,000 B.C., the Koliholmanok ("woods people") lived in the areas now called Calistoga, along Ritchey Creek and south as far as Rutherford. These hunter-gatherers made fine obsidian tools—knives, scrapers, arrow and spear points—as well as intricate baskets and ceremonial objects.

The Koliholmanok people were thought to number about 2,000 before the Europeans came to Alta California. When Spanish settlers arrived, it is believed that they called the native people *guapo* for their bravery, daring and good looks; the native people eventually became known as the Wappo. Mexican feudal barons and gold seekers upset the Wappo balance of life, and diseases such as smallpox devastated the Wappo population.



*The park is nestled among the rolling hills of Napa Valley wine country.*

By 1855, nearly 20 years after Missouri fur trapper George C. Yount planted the area's first grapevines, only a fraction of the Wappo people remained. Wappo descendants in Napa and Sonoma counties continue to practice and honor their ancestral traditions.

#### **Early Pioneers**

Dr. Edward T. Bale was given 18,000 acres of land in the 1840s through a Mexican land grant. To process grain into meal using water power, Dr. Bale built the nearby Bale Grist Mill, which is now a state historic park, 1.5 miles south of this park.

The valley's first school was built near the mill by Sarah Fosdick Graves, a member of the Donner Party. The first church in Napa Valley was built in 1853. Named for Asa White, its pioneer Methodist-Episcopal preacher, the church site is near Pioneer Cemetery on the History Trail.

Bothe-Napa Valley's visitor center was originally built for George and Angeline Kellogg Tucker around 1858. Tucker family graves lie in the park's Pioneer Cemetery.

The portion of Dr. Bale's land now called Bothe-Napa Valley State Park was purchased in the 1870s by Dr. and Mrs. Charles M. Hitchcock of San Francisco. The Hitchcocks' second home, "Lonely," was built on the property. Hitchcock, his wife Martha and his daughter, Lillie Hitchcock Coit, entertained San Francisco society at Lonely and helped popularize the sunny valley as a summer getaway from the city.

Lillie had been saved from a fire by San Francisco firemen when she was a child. She became an unofficial mascot for San Francisco's fire brigades. After Lillie Hitchcock Coit's death in 1929, her bequest to the city paid for the building of nozzle-shaped Coit Tower, honoring San Francisco's firefighters. Her summer home Lonely also burned to the ground in 1929.



*Paradise Park, 1929-1959, stood on this site. The resort's pool is all that remains.*



*The park offers numerous recreational opportunities—such as swimming, exploring the creek, hiking, camping, (continued on next page)*

## NATURAL RESOURCES AND WILDLIFE

The park ranges in elevation from 300 to 2,000 feet above sea level. Coast redwoods grow in the north slopes and canyons. Bothe-Napa Valley is the farthest inland of the redwood state parks.

Redwood forests obtain at least 30 percent of their moisture from fog. As the planet's climate changes, coast redwoods cannot absorb vital nutrients when less fog is present on warmer days.

Other trees include tan oak, Douglas-fir and madrone. Plants that the Wappo depended upon for food, medicine, shelter, tools, ceremonies and crafts still grow in the Native Plant Garden: oaks, ghost pine, sedge, Pacific rush, wild tobacco and soap root.

Volcanic rocks ranging in age from 3-5 million years underpin the park and accumulated in layers, ranging in composition and texture from frothy pumice to powdery ash lake deposits and glassy tuffs. These materials "born of fire" contribute to the highly prized characteristics of this world-class wine-producing region.

Animals in the park include the crow-sized pileated woodpecker, one of six different woodpeckers in the park. Most of the park's four-legged creatures are nocturnal, so mountain lions, coyotes, raccoons and bobcats are rarely seen.

## RECREATION

**Trails**—Almost 10 miles of trails, in 12 different loops, are available to hikers,

equestrians and bicyclists. The moderately strenuous Coyote Peak Trail is the most popular, climbing 1.5 miles to the 1,170-foot peak for scenic vistas of the valley and hills, Mount Saint Helena and Upper Ritchey Canyon. Other park trails vary in their difficulty.

The 1.1-mile History Trail leads from the picnic area past the Pioneer Cemetery to Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park. The Ritchey Canyon Trail leads to the Traverso Homestead site, dating to the 1880s.

**Picnics**—The park has 50 picnic tables with barbecue stoves and water faucets available. Campsite tables are reserved for registered campers. A large group picnic site has a shade ramada, a sink





Photo courtesy of Jim Scarf



Photo courtesy of Jules Evens

*sightseeing near the Pioneer Cemetery, or bird watching for pileated woodpeckers or endangered spotted owls.*

and an electrical outlet. Reserve the group picnic site by calling (707) 942-4575.

**Camping**—The park's 50 campsites are available year-round at the valley's only state park campground. Nine sites offer walk-in and tent-only camping. Another site is reserved for hikers and bicyclists. These ten sites are each limited to five occupants.

Forty site-specific family campsites may be reserved for dates between March and October. The group camp may be reserved year-round. Visit [www.parks.ca.gov](http://www.parks.ca.gov) or call (800) 444-7275 for details and reservations.

**Swimming**—Overheated valley visitors are tempted to cool off in natural spring water. One of only two public pools in the state park system, the former Paradise Park pool is usually open afternoons from Memorial Day until Labor Day.

**Visitor Center**—Generally open on weekends, the visitor center contains exhibits of plants, implements, ceremonial artifacts and baskets made or used by the Wappo. Historic photos of the property's earlier uses, including the popular Paradise Park era, are displayed. The sales area offers interpretive materials and local guidebooks.

### ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

**Camping**—Two accessible sites are near generally accessible restrooms, with roll-in showers nearby. Assistance may be needed. Accessible parking is available.

**Picnic Area**—The day-use and group picnic areas include accessible parking tables and adjacent restrooms/showers.

**Swimming Pool**—During summer months, a pool lift enhances swimming access.

**Campfire Center**—The campfire center includes accessible seating.

Accessibility is continually improving. For current updates, call (916) 445-8949 or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

### NEARBY STATE PARKS

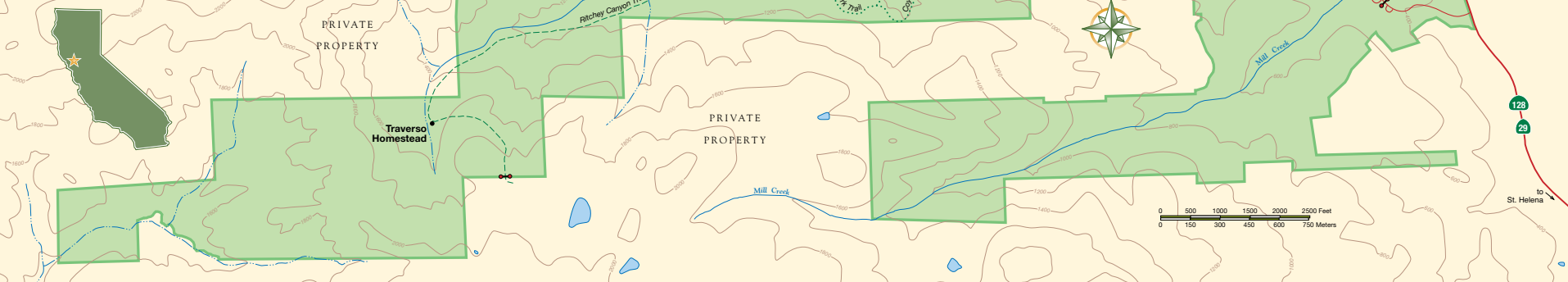
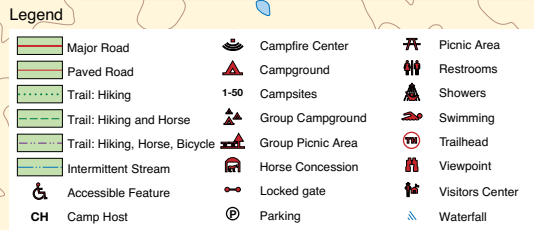
- Bale Grist Mill State Historic Park  
1.5 miles south off Highway 29  
(707) 942-4575
- Robert Louis Stevenson State Park  
12 miles north on Highway 29  
(707) 942-4575

### PLEASE REMEMBER

- All natural and cultural features, including down wood, are protected by law and may not be removed or disturbed. Firewood is sold by the camp hosts.
- Dogs must be on a six-foot maximum leash and must be confined to a tent or vehicle at night. Except for service animals, dogs are not allowed on trails or in the pool area.
- Fires are permitted only in park fire grates or stoves.
- Be on the watch for poison oak, found in nearly all areas of the park. Contact (even when dormant) can cause a severe rash. Remember, "Leaves of three—let them be!"





[illegible]

A large wooden water wheel is the central focus, partially obscured by a wooden structure. The wheel has many spokes and a large outer rim. It is surrounded by lush green trees and a wooden fence in the foreground. The scene is set in a park-like area with a dirt path.

## Bale Grist Mill SHP